

# Earth First!

## Action Update

No.42 Septemberish 1997

*"If the Nuremberg laws were applied today, then every director of a multinational would be hanged." Chomsky*

## Multinational action stations!

### GLOBAL ACTIONS AGAINST GENETIX

It's time to get active! Be creative, be strong, be loud. The future of Genetic Manipulation is at stake and there are the most crucial days. Governments, corporations, food retailers, supermarkets, farmers and investors are all watching over what laws and decisions they should take. They need to receive a very clear message. We do not want or need Genetic Manipulation on this planet. From October 3rd (Globe's birthday) to October 14th (World Food Day) people and organisations all over the world will be taking action against Genetix and in support of sustainable, organic agriculture. Simultaneous protests, press conferences and public events will take place at supermarkets, offices, labs, fields, and research centres. Actions are planned in India, Australia and other countries in Europe so let's get it together here in the States.

If international resistance against Genetix continues to grow, grassroots organisations could win the major battle against the multinationals and stop this new, non-sustainable technology before it wreaks havoc on the environment. The

food chain, public health, and rural and traditional communities.

If you or your group are planning something locally or would like to join in with national or local actions that will be happening in the UK, then contact GEN 0181 374 9314 or WEN 0171 923 9311 or email [gen@earthlink.net](mailto:gen@earthlink.net)

### END CORPORATE DOMINANCE

It globalises whole economies and forests, drains rivers dry, opens toxic waste and endures whole populations. It has all the rights of a citizen but few of the liberties. It crosses national borders as if they were schools. It is immortal and can therefore escape wealth and power beyond the capabilities of mere people. It has powers that dwarf and control governments. It controls the newspapers, radio and television and so it controls the "truth". It controls human access to food, water, shelter, employment and energy.

Are we talking about some sort of god? No, we're talking about the corporation.

Why do we allow an inanimate thing to have as much power over our lives and the fate of the entire planet? This is what the campaign to End Corporate Dominance is about - making our efforts directed at the root of the problem, not just the symptoms.

October 1997 will see groups across the world targeting their least favourite corporate phobias. Whether your group chooses Shell, Nike, Microsoft, whether your site is the corporate headquarters, or the Director's private residence, corporations around the world will feel the united rage. For details of what's happening in the UK contact Corporate Watch and no date list for upcoming events.

### 100 DAYS TO CHILL THE GLOBE WARMERS

100 DAYS is a growing network of groups and individuals. It is an initiative to challenge the oil industry throughout the 100 day countdown to Kyoto climate conference in December 1997. It is also a call to action!

**5 PACKET** is a week when BP backed down from suing Greenpeace over its occupation of the M25 Diesel oil platform in the Atlantic. From 1997, 100 DAYS kicked off on Saturday 23rd August with a national protest of around 25 BP garages. About 100 people and thousands of pump attendants assembled for their phones when Greenpeace underwent a Complete Value System Overhaul and banners proclaimed "BP: the climate is against you" and protesters by toilet bins in support.

**A ROOFTOP PROTEST** at London's Park Lane branch on the same day attracted gas-firing Diplomatic Police as dozens of millionaires-types added their names to Greenpeace's petition against oil exploration in the North Atlantic.

**LINCOLNSHIRE ACTIVISTS** accepted a grand opening of a new BP garage with their protest march to the embankment of the company.

**EXPOSING SHILL** in Nigeria. While 20 men will await trial for the same charges as Ken Saro



Submit the document number or other data via our OnLine Website

### ROLL UP..... ROLL UP FOR THE MYSTERY TOUR

Past Thors of the Dookers and Dookers trilogy is coming somebody's way soon so disaffected New Franceans prepare for the Dookers Mystery Tour. Karlens the Streets will be dancing into action with the Dookers in the same euphoric spirit of the Murrey Dookers rooftop occupation and the Trafalgar Square street party. This time the mystery might have got all the hidden guising mostly in the dark, so on many of them have greyish palms they can't know who's getting it next. The only thing they've got to go on is here for a £12.50 team ticket will get you. Come and witness democracy once again in Britain's brightest battle for the house. This will be Round 2, the score so far is two nil and we're going for the hat-trick.

Day trippers should come to London Victoria station, 10.10 am, Monday 22nd Sept. Bring £12.50 team fare, cigarettes, wine, hot-wine, maps, snacks, drinks, music and plenty of pizza. 0171 281 4421

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

Letter writing can be very effective. A job leader for vaccination has put an expansion as any person calling themselves Animal Rights activist to stop anyone from getting near his farm. To uphold the law we advise any person considering themselves as part of this category to write to: Murray Lawton-Claughton, 17 Red Lion Square, WC1R 4LU/MSL, Monitoring Christopher Brown at Nigerra Farm. This will cost him £10 for each copy of the expansion which, by law, he had to send you.

British EFL is organising on the 27-29th September, training & a mass trespass against the expansion of Dunford Quarry, which has been given the green light to expand into Ashton Court public park. Contact 0117 9428129 for further info.

The Jones, Action Update's 1997 Landowner of the Year, has had a lot of legal on back. The judge dealing with his various evictions of his fields has ruled that he cannot keep all of the families together (in one time and money) but must deal with them separately. This little victory was made all the more major when the judge then adjourned the case until after Christmas.

Women Speak Out is a weekend of events organised by Bedford Women Peace Camp to mark the 40th anniversary of the Windmill nuclear disaster and against the nuclear-military class. It happens on the 26-28th September at the Leeds University Union. Contact Bedford Women Peace Camp 01482 481429.

"The Corporate Planet: Ecology and Politics in the Age of Globalisation" is available from Seven Club Books or Corporate World's new website [www.sevenclub.co.uk/corporateplanet.html](http://www.sevenclub.co.uk/corporateplanet.html). It outlines the emerging environmental conflict between corporations wanting the freedom to plunder the earth's boundaries and people who depend on the earth for their existence. Essential reading for all who want to be informed members of the Earth Family in the globalisation period." Dr Vladimir Shiva, Research Foundation for Science, Technology & Natural Resource Policy, India. Get your local library to order a copy now.

Time is running out for Barry Horne who has been on hunger strike since the beginning of August. His physical condition is deteriorating but he remains strong to spirit. The hunger strike follows Labour's recent statement revoking all pre-election promises of a partial end to privatisation. Due to its terms, campaigning has focused on political targets with home visits and office visits for Home Secretary Jack Straw and organisations of Labour HQ. Contact Barry Horne Support Campaign 0871 278 3988.

The Fanning Mad Rally is the culmination of lots of anti-war campaigning in all forms. This large national rally, organised by Friends of the Earth, Green party, Planet Cymru, Transwomens Guilda, WI and others, is on 27th sep at Jipco, Trafalgar Square. Contact Fof at the Rally line 0171 5661698.

Wives, renewed ethnic conflict in West region of the Niger Delta has seen attacks on Shell, Chevron and Tropicare installations so local frustration has such into unrest. 200 have been killed, whole settlements destroyed and damage caused estimated at \$15million.

UK 2005 (background "subvertising" agency) is asking for all related info/leads around the UK to be 'improved'.

GM/TA are considering organising a short, symbolic hunger strike in support of the 19 Op prisoners still on Nigeria's Death Row following protests against Shell.

There's still a while to go before the 100 days are up - get involved in an action now. Contact 100 DAYS, 0171 9638234 or e-mail 100days@earthfirst.org

## BOSNIA WINS BURGER WAR

Four years of war in Bosnia all but wiped out the local small business infrastructure and left the door wide open for Western businesses and governments. However, one victory multinational won't be recording amongst the rest in the name of 'winning a war'. The Bosnian government has declared that it will not allow McDonalds to build on its territory, a post-communist, East European first. After a whole year of organisations the world's most arrogant corporation still refused to produce locally preferring instead to transport their McDonalds from far off several dozens. This led to the Government decision which will safeguard local food vendors from the otherwise catastrophic cash trading larger culture.

## EARTH FIRST ARRIVAL AT KINGS CROSS?

Capenhagen Park is a green oasis near Kings Cross, providing relief from the craziness of London's urban sprawl. Many people from local housing units see the land as their only garden. This is threatened however by a planning application from the New Langston and Hackney Housing Association who want to build flats on the land. Capenhagen argue that the destruction of a precious green space is not necessary and that the flats would either be built on derelict land or the Housing Association could relocate elsewhere unsuitable around housing in the area. A campaign has recently been launched to protect the Park - contact Save Capenhagen Park via Reclaim the Streets, London.

## DELTA UPDATE

United grassroots opposition to oil companies destroying the Niger delta is growing as demands by activist move closer to Nigeria. The newly formed 'Citizens movement', named after the signs and that contains both the movements and the people who depend on them, is pressuring Shell to either close up oil spills and pay compensation to affected communities or get out. At a time when international pressure is beginning to waver, Shell is avoiding paying compensation at all costs and is moving talk of sabotage.

Continuing poverty with no hope led to a spring and summer of violent unrest around Warri and Yenke. Oil companies were the clear targets at first but then a descent into ethnic conflict began some after companies and government tactics of divide and rule worked well. The regime then announced its 'Operation Sabrang' to further

ethnic unity of the Delta and ensure a smooth flow of oil and profits.

While Shell's PR strategy is to talk about human rights the company is still being sued by the family of Ken Saro-Wiwa for conspiracy to violently suppress peaceful environmental and human rights protests.

Roads and bridges continue in Ogoni, which remains under siege with 25 hostages still in prison. They began a hunger strike protesting about conditions and tortures. Meanwhile, Shell announced that it intends to return to Ogoni, but evades of the trials over recently and declared that the company will never be voluntary.

Shell celebrates its 100th birthday on October 18th. Contact Delta 0116 2533223

## FASLANE PEACE ARTISTS

Fun and frolics weekend at the fifteen year old camp. The weekend actors all don't arrived but the acting game is a pre-active one. The latest music theory to the base was introduced last week by over forty people who swapped the trucks and blanked the route at the front and rear with their bodies and a tunnel under the roof. While marching coppers charged out the tunnel, the blunders quickly got onto the roof and the dull (yet deadly) lead was redecorated with new bright paints. More Palace artwork can be appreciated at the two day Peace Artists Fall which looks off on Saturday 27 Sep. There'll be live music, poetry, DJs, food and lots, lots more. 01346 570461

## SOUTH EAST EFL GATHERING

At the EFL Gathering the idea of having a South East regional Gathering was discussed and people are now trying to organise one for later in the year. It all depends on how much help people offer the new for the weekend and a piece of land, possibly with a building that can accommodate up to 100 people and is free (or very cheap), sitting for the same number of people and organisations/affairs of workshops. There is no money to say donations would be very useful - shops and PO's payable to Earth First! Anybody that can help with any of these things please contact South East EFL Gathering, c/o PO Box 9436, London SE4 4JY.

## HUNTINGDON RESEARCH CENTRE

Huntingdon Research Centre, aka Huntingdon Life Sciences, is facing a possible shutdown in the light of an inquiry which began after a Channel 4 documentary revealed the extent of HRC's brutal activities. The documentary showed employees lacking and having a baggy against a wall and poisoning, shooting and laughing at dogs. This forced the government to announce that it was giving the company until November 30th to "show improvements" or face its virtual closure. The event was followed by a collapse in the company's share, wiping 180 million of their share price overnight, and ever half their customers either withdrawing contracts, or not placing new work with the company. David Christopher, Research Labs Director of HRC, suddenly resigned from the Animal Procedures Committee. The Research Defence Society announced in its July newsletter that it had

## How to Contact the Earth First! Action Update

Post: Earth First! Action Update, Dept 28, 1 Newton Street, Manchester M1 1BN. Telephone: 0161 224 6646. E-mail: [actionupdate@eafp.org](mailto:actionupdate@eafp.org). Enclose a SAE for replies. Send us your details if you want to subscribe to the free e-mail service.

Earth First! Website address: <http://www.earthfirst.org.uk/campaigns/EF/actionfirst.html>

# Affinity Groups

"The vital flow of life back and forth from affinity groups to core, the intense sense of community that binds together all the groups internally as well as externally has no parallel...[the structure of affinity groups] has raised the abiding sense of responsibility - not merely to a 'mass' to a social end, but as an expression of that end, the goal of a free non-hierarchical society as the fullest sense of this term"

Murray Bookchin, "From Run to Core", *Peace News*, October 1977

## What is an Affinity Group?

An affinity group is a group of people who have something in common with each other, who have decided that they want to take part in political action as a close, supportive group, and who meet regularly. An affinity group structure recognizes the need for several roles in effective campaigning alongside 'activist' as well as the need for several types of support - emotional as well as legal.

Working in affinity groups also recognizes the need to move away from an individualistic model of activity and the need to move towards one which uses a model of active participation.

## History

Affinity groups take their names from the 'grupos de afinidad' devised by Spanish anarchists in pre-Franco days. The idea was then developed to be used in the occupation of a nuclear power plant site at Seabrook, New Hampshire, USA, in 1977. 2000 people took part, two thirds of whom were arrested. The action's success was attributed to most of the occupiers undergoing non-violent training in small affinity groups and their co-ordination in a democratic structure emphasizing equality and participation. In the 1980s the peace movement in Britain used affinity groups for both specific non-violent direct action events and for ongoing, small and supportive non-violent action groups.

## Structure

An affinity group usually consists of between 3 and 15 people. Such a group can be used ad hoc - formed for a specific action then disbanded - or can try and meet regularly - for evaluation, planning, action and support. There are a whole host of possible roles - these could include contact person, media, support, legal as well as those prepared to get arrested. Reaching collective decisions using a number of affinity groups on a large scale action can be achieved through a 'preconceived' to which each affinity group sends a representative, who feeds in the views of the group and also feeds back what other groups are thinking.

## Why Affinity Groups?

*Sustaining a campaign for the long haul and encouraging confidence in action*

Affinity groups can bring an often poorly

planned or over-theorized element to our work - that of support. Campaigning can be wearing as we come up against obstacles all the time both external and internal, including bailiffs, fences, police, physical violence, courts, fear, doubt, despair. Trying to tackle all of these alone can be too much but in a group of supportive, sympathetic people, fears and doubts can be listened to and transformed into a confidence to take risks and action for our beliefs. The solidarity of affinity groups communicates the intended message that we are powerless and alone, or the contrast suggests that we must let the experts, the

a small group of leaders who may burn out quickly

## Countering state oppression

At a time of increasing state oppression of environmental activists affinity groups provide a new dimension, not just by ensuring that the movement does not rely on steady picket off any individuals, but also in encouraging any individuals within a small group or challenging this as a group gain to know each other's skills, strengths and weaknesses. An affinity group structure also moves that information is decentralized, limiting the possibilities for full disclosure of an action.

## Thinking strategically

An affinity group provides space to follow up actions, evaluate and carry the momentum forward into the next action.

## Avoiding violence

Acting in small groups with support reduces last-threshold situations by reducing the need for violence and making people less prone to panic. Operating as a group also allows those involved to know who they are working with and define boundaries, eg non-violence, if they so wish.

## Improving organization

Obviously it is easier to keep in touch with 10 affinity groups than with 120 individuals!

Affinity groups recognize the importance of community as a foundation for our resistance and offer us the chance to enact a vision now - that of supportive, non-hierarchical, participatory, flexible and friendly groups of people taking action.

Whilst affinity groups take forward some elements that Earth First! attempts already (avoidance of hierarchy, participation in decision-making), adopting affinity groups recognizes that 'structure' is different to 'authoritarianism' and enables us to challenge the conference between the two.

Large parts of the above are from *Affinity Groups* produced by the League for Non-Violence project (01865 770833). Other useful resources are *Paths of Resistance* by Per Hjembo (New Society Publishers) and 'Sustaining ourselves for the long haul', *Peace News*, May 97 and 'From Seabrook to Gochin: the role of affinity groups', *Peace News*, April 97.



*This is a good size for an affinity group but it may be a bit small for some*

politicians, the professional campaigners make changes on our behalf. Being part of an affinity group strengthens our ability to take direct action - to act directly in a situation without recourse to a representative.

## Subverting leadership, encouraging participation

Affinity groups provide a challenge to individualistic techniques and culture which all too often allow ego or territorial claims to undermine otherwise successful campaigning. By working in consensus-based small groups, all members are able to participate in planning, decision-making and carrying out decisions, avoiding relying on strong, often tacit leaders and making people less prone to being manipulated by self-styled leaders. Because affinity groups are self-governing and fully responsible they use the energy of all participants rather than relying on the drive of

## SEND US YOUR NEWS!!

We can't tell you if you don't tell us. Send your news, stories, prisoners addresses, quotes, leaflets and up coming dates on the back of an envelope, A4 sheet, computer disk (email to EFF.UK), Don't forget pictures, (as photos or graphics files) or drawings.

## EE! CONTACTS SEPTEMBER '97

Arvin Valley IFF  
c/o 1 York Rd  
Lodi, CA 93240  
W. Bureau  
61605 729 4016  
[arvinvalleyiff@att.net](mailto:arvinvalleyiff@att.net)  
Arvin Group IFF

Earth First! is not a conventional environmental organization. The above contacts are other contacts are one

ive group or a campaign budget and the use of direct solicitation groups that combine mass and principled strategies.

Chemically  $\gamma$ -irradiated and  
Free-Form Support  
also (Information 30)

DTU FRS

Postlethwaite Rd  
London NW6 3TL  
0171 278 008  
mcf@org.kite[il]gi.apc.org

01463 381081  
Fax: 01463 343082  
[enquiries@pcc.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@pcc.gov.uk)

## WHAT IS EARTH FIRST!?

Earth First! is not a cohesive group or a set of dogma but a convenient label for people who share similar philosophies to work under. The general philosophy behind the name are non-hierarchical organizations and the use of direct action to confront, stop, and eventually remove the forces that are responsible for the destruction of the Earth and it's inhabitants. The above contacts are autonomous groups that consider themselves to share these principles. Autonomous contacts are groups of people who are not connected to groups. Other contacts are ones whose aims and principles are more than agreeable with ours, but they are not people that think we will be of use or interest to people.



NEWBURY RE-RE-  
UNION

There's been another action on the route of the Newbury Bypass to commemorate the granting of a Contax's main contract. The action took place on the day of Diana's funeral, and the Highway Agency had stopped work in a gesture of respect.

After a route walk and cycle one of the compounds at Shamsara Green was occupied and survey stakes were removed before the predators, outnumbered by ambushed police taking no chances after the last got together, remounted off to the north.

All machinery had been moved into secure areas and there was a constant police presence but later in the day more survey stakes were removed and given mysteriously cleaned up. Latest weather reports have it that throughout the year the notorious biting winds of Newbury have continued to make themselves felt.

po Plans for the gravel pit at Spans Moon have been rescaled because the gravel is not used enough for the road. Pity.

## WEST PAPUA CRISIS CONTINUES

These late August four Flares rebel people have been killed in the area around Prosper and Elgin Texas's giant mine in West Fries. Following the deaths, approximately 1000 protesters marched Prosper property and blockaded the main road to the mine. The police, with the support of the military, have once demanded that people hand over all their objects, including their arms, apans and harrow. There are not only vital to the people for agriculture and hunting but they also have great cultural and religious significance. Tensions were running high in the area because Prosper had just announced the second phase of its 10% was first, so strong to try off all local residents in the mine. It has been reported that the Time Texas brothers of Bouquerville as well as PMSO, have refused to comment. Contact Corporate Watch Inc RTZ address in the UK

## RADSTOCK RAILWAY

Cash grabbing owners and big business are at it again in Somerset, ignoring the needs of the local community and trading the land for profit. The Bathwick to Frome railway line has been owned for 8 years and in this time has passed a whole host of acts, unchallenged and unopposed protected substances as well as a 'Site of Nature Conservation' order. All in now under threat by a proposed development by Baxcor Homes who are going to regenerate the area with some housing, roads and a supermarket. As part of the

and Bonar Homan give the Roadside railway line and they're promoting a locally tempting boost to tourism by bringing back steam trains. However, Bonar Homan is aware by Homan's, and it's been discovered that 90% of the rail traffic will actually be non-passenger freight including materials to and from nearby quarries, also owned by Homan. Locals are banding together with a range of alternative development. They have also set up a camp and completed their first house. They're appealing for the net and still sharing as if you want to remain Road Homan of how much of a trend he is and pass on your country culture to competing levels then get down to business. On the way to the road, the road and systems where you find the road railway. Superb news for living vehicles. Contact via Lake 01761 433273.

## MASS BLOCKADE OF GOVERNMENT RUN ARMS FAIR

Around 1,800 people joined in a Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT) protest against the Royal Navy and British Army Equipment Exhibitions (or Russian Remains). This is Britain's biggest arms fair with exhibitors from 300 companies and delegates from over 80 countries.

Several Kurdish groups concerned about British arms sales to Turkey took part and organised five teach ins for the demonstration. Protesters blocked what was to be the main entrance to the exhibition and then groups moved off to block other possible entrances. Two groups were assembled for the whole day and others were blocked for long periods of time. In all 85 demonstrators were arrested, mostly for selfish photographs. Just over 20 people totally breached security and got in aim to disrupt the exhibition. They were charged with aggravated breach.

This was CAAT's biggest anti-arme fair event ever and it generated a lot of interest throughout the country and in the media. The campaign against arme fairs will be continued with a demonstration at COPEX on the 30th Sept - 1st Oct in Farnborough. Contact CAAT on 0771 281 8297.

## TEIGNGRACE CAMPAIGN HALTS CONTRACTORS

The anti-quarry campaign of Tezpurites, over Nineween Abbots have won a temporary halt to construction and forced the government to consider a viable economy. Over knocking and

Syringus means that we had to lead them outside of the house, standing on saguaro in John Prescott who has since stopped working. The situation was not so good as it seemed at first. The attempt is not expected until a week or two from now, growing the company more time to grow and realize their future plans. Local government is represented by a 18th-century march on London, planned to set off on Sat 7th Sep. Celebrate the strength and increasing popularity of desert culture campaigning when things go wrong to come. Arrive in Westminster at 10pm, repeated on 7th Oct. While waiting for the party, and in between activities, why not send another letter to John Prescott. For more info call 0467 432824

## SURVIVING IN A GLOBALISED WORLD

Play Fair Europe are hosting the International Academic University on North South Issues and the environment "Surviving in a Globalised World" will take place in Aachen, Germany (23 Sept-4 Oct). There'll be representation from Karnataka State Farmers (India), MOSOP (Nigeria), Movement Sans Terre (France), Parents Movement of the Philippines, Students Workers' Central Union (Nicaragua), EELN (Chile), Miao 86 (Ukraine), Indigenous Women's Network and the International South Ocean (Zimbabwe).

The programme describes in detail the current shape of the globalisation process, particularly the WTO and will take place in English and Spanish. Details about accommodations, etc at <http://www.ats-berlin.de/ats/eng/eng.htm> or Play Fair Europe! Tel: +49-30-325 37 92. Hays, hays@hays.com

## IRELAND'S GLEN OF THE DOWNS

Like a hawk - for a little while - on Ireland? Glen of the Downs is as good as a second one if it's about to be destroyed unless we get people there to stop the Irish state using ECJaid Britain money to expand Ireland's bit of the Trans European Road Network through Wicklow. Known as the Garden of Ireland, County Wicklow, with its golden mountains, hidden valleys, glancing lakes, gushing rivers among Ireland's hills and sea are some of the most beautiful in the world. The same goes for Ireland's sensational media even though the bullshitters are still silent, so people with ecological road rage must/firmly are desperately needed! Also there is a genuine fear that the media attention will bring the police down on the few people who are keeping a permanent presence at the Glen, so reinforcements are needed sooner rather than later - email to [england@net.net.uk](mailto:england@net.net.uk) 09 233 61 51377.

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